

Ward Hadaway – Lawyers for Education

## Insight: Education

# Your monthly education sector news roundup

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# Insight: Education

Round up

## Welcome

Welcome to the December edition of our monthly newsletter for those working in the education sector. We hope you will find this a useful summary of latest developments in schools, further and higher education and the training and apprenticeships arena. If you have any comments on the format or want more detail about a particular subject, [please do not hesitate to contact any of us](#).

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## Education Secretary launches Institute for Teaching

The Education Secretary Justine Greening has opened the Institute for Teaching – "a specialist graduate school for teachers" which is aimed at improving the training and development of qualified teachers.

It is thought that the Institute will be open to teachers at various stages of their careers and will operate by offering a wide range of courses such as:

- » A Masters in Expert Teaching;
- » A Fellowship in Teacher Education; and
- » A Transforming Teaching course.

### Where will the Institute operate?

To begin with, it is thought that the Institute will operate mainly in Northern and Central England focussing specifically on the previously identified "Opportunity Areas" which have been described as social mobility "cold spots".

For more information please [click here](#).

*"We want to ensure every child can reach their potential, wherever they are growing up and great teachers are at the heart of this. I want high-quality professional development to be a fundamental part of a teacher's career and these new programmes – backed by government funding – will give them skills, confidence and knowledge they need to provide a world class education for all children"*

**JUSTINE GREENING**  
EDUCATION SECRETARY

*"Having an expert teacher in every classroom is the best way to make sure that every pupil, regardless of their background, gets a great education. But teaching is complex – becoming an expert isn't easy. To improve teaching, we have to improve the training teachers get because most of what's out there isn't helping them to get better. Working with our partners, we're trying to change that."*

**MATT HOOD**  
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR

## Department for Education publishes consultation on safeguarding changes

The Department for Education has published an [open consultation](#) seeking views on changes to the statutory guidance regarding the safeguarding of children in the UK.

### What does the consultation focus on?

In particular, the consultation is focussed on determining how best to implement the legislative changes which came about because of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 in to the current "Working Together to Safeguard Children" guidance. Such changes include:

- » The replacement of Local Children Safeguarding Boards with local safeguarding partners; and
- » The establishment of a new national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

### Replacement of Local Children Safeguarding Boards

The consultation looks to gather views on the introduction of new safeguarding partners made up of local authorities, police chief officers, and clinical commissioning groups.

Currently, it is thought that such partners will arrange for the review of serious child safeguarding cases in their areas and will have the authority to require information to be submitted where it will assist with the performance of their enquiries.

### Establishment of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel

As part of an attempt to better learn from previous cases, the consultation also focuses on the establishment of a new national Civil Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

This Panel is to be responsible for commissioning and supervising reviewers in particularly complex issues, or those which are of national importance.

### Further information

The consultation will close at 11:45pm on 31 December 2017. Following this date, the Government proposes to update and replace the current statutory guidance.

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## Statistics suggest that the number of inactive academy sponsors is increasing

According to the latest [Academies Report](#), the number of inactive academy sponsors in England and Wales are increasing year on year.

### What are "academy sponsors"?

Academy sponsors include philanthropists, businesses and members of the voluntary sector who have been granted permission by the Department for Education to take on and run usually under-performing schools.

"Active academy sponsors" are those which run one or more open or planned-to-open academies on top of their original founder school, whereas "inactive academy sponsors" are those which do not.

### Why is this important?

There are various conflicting views as to the importance of the findings with some, such as the general secretary of the National Education Union, suggesting that growing the number of inactive academy sponsors is ineffective and causes confusion.

However, contrary to this the Department for Education has said that having more approved sponsors ensures that more suitable matches are made in the sector.

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## Research predicts there to be an increasing number of "coasting schools"

This month, the Department for Education [confirmed the coasting definition](#) for primary and secondary schools. Secondary schools will be considered coasting if they receive a Progress 8 score of less than -0.25 in both 2017 and 2016 and less than 60 per cent of their pupils achieved five A\* to C grades at GCSE including maths and English in 2015.

In 2017 there was an eight per cent increase in the number of schools falling below this mark and qualifying as coasting and research based on this summer's provisional GCSE results data suggests that this figure is set to increase this year.

### Commentary

The prospect of a rise in the number of coasting schools has unsettled school leaders. Nick Brook, the deputy general secretary of the head teachers' union (NAHT) has described the new definition as an "unhelpful" and "narrow" measure of accountability, which will sanction schools. He explained that defining a school as coasting in the first place casts a shadow of fear over school leaders and creates pressure that makes little positive difference.

James Bowen, another member of NAHT has called for the measure to be dropped as it is "based on the erroneous and outdated premise that school performance can be judged on data alone".

# Insight: Education

Quick read

## Need to know – your policy and guidance quick read

### ESFA framework document

This framework document has been issued to underpin and facilitate the relationship between the Education and Skills Funding Agency (the ESFA) and the Department for Education. It sets out the broad framework within which the ESFA will operate.

### Reducing teacher workload

This policy paper was produced by the Department for Education with details of what the Government is doing to reduce unnecessary workload for teachers to help them concentrate on teaching and their own development. The DfE are developing a workload reduction toolkit to help schools manage the workload of their teachers effectively.

### "Plans to further boost teacher recruitment and development".

Staff at the National College for Teaching and leadership and the Department for Education are set to combine to form one team to take on teacher recruitment functions with the aim to better align efforts to attract the best and brightest into the profession, as well as to continually support teachers at every stage of their career and encourage their development.

### Universal Credit and the new eligibility for free school meals

The Autumn 2017 budget has introduced new plans for Universal Credit which is gradually being rolled-out, it will replace the existing six benefits with one single payment, which gradually reduces as earnings increase. The change in the system means a number of the benefits that were used to determine eligibility will cease to exist and instead under the new system, any child in a household gaining the credit will be eligible for free meals. The simplification to one credit means that some children in households earning up to £55,000 will now be eligible for school meals.

# Insight: Education

*Meet the team*

## Meet the Education Team

As the evolving educational landscape continues to open up new opportunities and present challenges, you need to be confident that you are getting the right legal advice, at the right time and, of course, at the right price. Ward Hadaway's

Education Team is recognised as a leading national player. Our friendly, commercial and pragmatic approach allows you to be reassured that you are in safe hands.

Whether you are a maintained school, academy, multi academy trust, free school, studio school or UTC, our team have an in-depth, up-to-date knowledge of the sector, making us ideally placed to offer the best possible advice to all those involved in the delivery of educational excellence for pupils, students and their communities. [Click here](#) to read about how we can work with you.

### Your key contacts



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